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SUBJECT: UNMIS DDR PROGRAM TO REQUEST FUNDING AT SUDAN CONSORTIUM IN
PARIS

REF: KHARTOUM 506

1. (SBU) At a meeting of the AEC Security working group April 2 UNMIS DDR Chief Adrian Verheul described plans for an April 9 high-level roundtable meeting in Khartoum of UN officials, donors and GOS officials to develop comprehensive DDR program. Verheul plans to follow this up with a request for DDR funding at the Sudan Consortium in Paris. He said the program would impact 50,000 Northern and Southern soldiers over a two year period. Ultimately, DDR would disarm and reintegrate an estimated 182,000 soldiers in both the North and the South at an estimated cost of \$700 million over several years.

2. (SBU) Verheul assessed that DDR programming to date has had only limited success. He said that disarmament of soldiers can be counted in the dozens; there has been limited demobilization of soldiers in both the North and the South, and reintegration programs have only just begun. However, in November the DDR program achieved a major breakthrough when the Presidency adopted a National DDR Strategy which provided the legal basis to move forward with a program. Furthermore, the Presidency is expected to announce a National Reintegration Policy (NRP) and propose a budget for submission to the Sudan Consortium in Paris in early May. Verheul said the program is a sign of Sudanese commitment and provides the legal and policy framework for future DDR programs.

3. (SBU) Verheul, who arrived in February 2008, criticized existing DDR programs saying that policy and politics drove current DDR program planning and that these programs represent a systematic program. Verheul noted that disarmament programs are often driven by political forces, which are prone to abrupt starts and stops, while reintegration programs are essentially development programs which must be well regulated and managed over a defined period of time. Proper planning and timing are essential in developing an effective DDR program, Verheul said. Funds must be available to conduct all phases of the program. Verheul cautioned against starting a demobilization program without a fully planned and funded reintegration program. Any delays in programming would only invite former combatants to rearm themselves and turn to petty crime, as forces did in Eastern Sudan and other parts of the world.

4. (SBU) Verheul explained that initial program success is critical to the success of the entire program. If soldiers can be properly disarmed and given skills to replace their weapons, this would give confidence to future ex-combatants, to both Northern and Southern governments, and to the international community that the DDR program can achieve results. Verheul outlined a plan to transition 50,000 veterans in the first year of the program by targeting veterans who currently play no combat role and have no military significance. The choice of veterans who play no combat role is deliberate in order to permit both sides to observe the success of the DDR program

before committing to demobilize their front-line soldiers.

15. (SBU) Verheul said that currently-identified funding is inadequate. Based on current estimates of 182,000 DDR program candidates in both the North and the South, at a programming cost of \$3,000 per person for two years, the requirement would reach up to \$600 to \$700 million dollars over two years. Verhel acknowledged that donors would be skeptical since none of the currently budgeted \$49 million has been spent, but explained that a policy framework was not in place previously.

16. (SBU) Asked if this proposed DDR program could also be used for LRA troops, Verheul said yes, but it would be a logistical nightmare to set up. He said that programs would be established in Sudan and along the border with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). However, as the families of the combatants are normally part of any DDR program, if there is snag in the schedule the LRA families will need to be cared for on an extended basis. This will be a drain on UNMIS resources.

17. (SBU) Verheul noted the many potential obstacles. He said that while a program can be expressed in the simple arithmetic of collecting arms, the real challenge is to "disarm the mind of the combatants first." He said there are deep cultural roots of resolving disputes through violence in this society, and there are real security concerns of being unarmed in a society where guns have been a factor for a long time. "It would be very dangerous to give away your weapon if your neighbor still has his." Verheul noted the scale of the problem in Sudan: there are an estimated two to three million arms in both North and South. He recognized that only 30 percent of these arms are in the hands of the governments, with the remaining arms controlled by unofficial militias.

18. (SBU) Verheul said that in preparation for the April 9 meeting in

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Sudan, and for the early May Sudan Consortium meeting in Paris, he plans to travel to the UN in New York for high-level discussions with potential donors to present his DDR proposal. He will make a case for a \$20 million reintegration communications campaign program to kick-start the first phase of the DDR program. At the April 9 roundtable hosted by UNMIS, Verheul said that prospective donors and Sudanese representatives will discuss DDR programs in light of the recent GOS policy framework.

19. (SBU) Comment: Verheul's comprehensive DDR program proposal was well received at the informal AEC meeting. There is broad consensus that an effective DDR program is required; the question is how to get the program started and funded given political-military realities in Sudan. The program should be especially well received in the South, where the SPLA is trying to demobilize veterans. Verheul said he will note the endorsement of the AEC when he presents his plan in Paris.

FERNANDEZ